



Tominac Fitness Center offers free personal trainers, See Page 1C

Gates applauds Soldiers' success

Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates talked with Iraqi leaders and U.S. commanders Dec. 5 to explore ways to maintain momentum built in recent months and continue to build on it.

Gates met with Iraqi President Jalal Talibani, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, Defense Minister Abd al-Qadir al-Mufriji and U.S. commanders. On his sixth visit

as defense secretary, Gates noted vast security improvements.

During a joint news conference with Mufriji, Gates cited "recent months of dramatic change in the security situation across the nation, a decline in violence to levels not seen since the Samarra mosque bombing nearly two years ago."

As Coalition and Iraqi operations have pushed terrorists out of much of southern and western Iraq, they've brought a sense of normalcy and hope to areas that had long gone without it, he told reporters.

See GATES _____ Page 8A

Installation residents to receive mock bills

Kaytrina Curtis
Hunter Public Affairs

Historically, living in on-post housing meant that Families could use as much electricity and or gas that they wanted without financial accountability. However, that is about to change.

Many Hunter Army Airfield residents were in attendance at the New Gannam

Community Center, Dec. 5, upset and confused about the new mock billing process now conducted at Hunter and Fort Stewart.

When the meeting adjourned, however, most in attendance departed with a better understanding of the basis and methodology to be used to equitably calculate utility bills for on-post residents.

See MOCK _____ Page 8A

RCI employs WTU Soldiers

Lina Satele
Frontline Staff

Fort Stewart, Ga. - The Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield Department of Public Works' housing department has been working with Soldiers from the Warrior's in Transition unit in the assess-

ment of the barracks on both installations.

"The Residential Army Community Initiative main propose is to provide Army Families with quality housing and included in that initiative is the Unaccompanied Personnel Housing program," said Chris Curry, RCI Director.

See RCI _____ Page 8A



Pat Young
The 3rd Infantry Division Color Guard marched in the 11th annual Christmas parade in downtown Hinesville, Dec. 9 to the thunderous applaud of thousands of community members in attendance. See story on Page 8B.

WWII veterans attend annual Pearl Harbor Day observance

Gail Aldridge
Public Affairs Specialist

Three World War II veterans were among the area veterans who met Saturday at the Georgia Army National Guard Armory in Hinesville for the Annual Pearl Harbor Day Observance Ceremony.

This event, sponsored each year by the Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 46 in Hinesville featured guest speaker Col. John P. Collins, U.S. Army Medical Department Activity Commander. MEDDAC also provided a Color Guard, who posted and retired the colors for the ceremony. Collins reflected on the events of December 7, 1941.

He said history records the text of President Roosevelt's "Day of Infamy" speech given over

public radio to the Congress of the United States, December 8, 1941, when Roosevelt said, "Yesterday, December 7, 1941 - a date which will live in infamy - the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan. As Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense. No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory. With confidence in our armed forces - with the unbounded determination of our people - we will gain the inevitable triumph - so help us God."

Garlon Penland, commander of DAV Chapter 46, stated he was glad to have World War II veterans attend the memorial service.

See PEARL _____ Page 2A

Toys-for-Tots drive needs you

Molly O'Hearon
DMWR Public Relations

Saturday is the last day to donate to the Toys for Tots drive on Fort Stewart. The Toys for Tots Foundation provides disadvantaged children with presents for Christmas. In 2006, the foundation delivered more than 19.2 million toys to over 7.6 million children.

The toy drive provides gifts for children that might not receive any thing else this holiday season. Donations to the toy drive can be made at the Commissary, PX, library, welcome

center and other designated Toys for Tots boxes throughout the installation.

All toys should be new, unwrapped toys. All donations will be picked up and sorted by volunteers on Saturday.

The presents will be taken to a warehouse where they will be separated by gender and age, bagged, labeled, and then given to the battalions to distribute to the Families that have applied.

For more information about the toy drive, call Army Community Service at 767-5058/1297.



Sgt. 1st Class Marty Collins

Pfc. Alex Catlett, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, receives his Shoulder Sleeve Insignia for Former Wartime Service from Staff Sgt. Edwin Morales, HHC, 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., during a ceremony held at Forward Operating Base Kalsu, Dec. 5. See story on Page 2A.



Experience the holiday spirit, see Page 8B, 9B

Take advantage of free tax filing at Stewart-Hunter, See Page 6A

Discover Stewart-Hunter treasure at Pot-of-Gold ceremony, See Page 1B



Marne 6 Sends

CG thanks Mayor Ratcliffe, Hinesville, Families

Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch
3rd Inf. Div. commanding general

Although we are doing important work over here, we can focus on the fight because of many wonderfully supportive members of the Hinesville Community, but I would like to focus on one man – Mayor Tom Ratcliffe. In my 30 years in the Army, I have never seen a community embrace its local military base as much as Hinesville; and it that is largely due to the fact that Mayor Ratcliffe is a man of vision. He is truly a selfless servant, and has worked hard every day to meet the needs of the community, most especially the military members of the community. Mayor Ratcliffe worked tirelessly to make Hinesville not just a community, but a home; and he dedicated himself to serving our mil-

itary Families. Everything he did revolved around helping our Families, and as a deployed division, there is no more important task. There is a lot I worry about over here. Task Force Marne has 20,000 Soldiers and a battlefield the size of the state of West Virginia. When we got over here, our Soldiers were suffering attacks by the hour. In May alone, I attended 29 memorial services for our fallen heroes. Security is much better now, and just last week the Division suffered no casualties and no fatalities. But I spent no time worrying about our Families because I knew Mayor Ratcliffe had



the reins back home. He insured all of our Soldiers' Families were taken care of, and I can never express how much the Division appreciates his leadership. The 3rd Infantry Division and its Soldiers are indebted to Mayor Ratcliffe. More than ever before, a lot of our Soldiers are choosing to retire in Hinesville – they want to stay there, they want to keep their children in schools there, and they want to find jobs there. All of that is a testament to Mayor Ratcliffe's hard work toward building a stronger community. For those of us in the military, we tend to retire in the community

we feel most at home, and for our Dog Face Soldiers, Mayor Ratcliffe made Fort Stewart their home. As we farewell Mayor Ratcliffe, we welcome Mayor Jim Thomas. Mayor Thomas is a retired military officer, so he understands that military Families are the Nation's most precious resource. The 3rd Infantry Division looks forward to working as closely with Mayor Thomas as it did with Mayor Ratcliffe. Although the 3rd Infantry Division is currently deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism for the third time, I don't lose any sleep wondering if our Families are being cared for because I know that Hinesville is watching out for them and taking care of them as their own.

Rock of the Marne!

Vanguard Company holds patch ceremony

Pfc. Amanda McBride
4th BCT Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE KALSU, Iraq – Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, received their Shoulder Sleeve Insignia for Former Wartime Service during a ceremony held at FOB Kalsu, Dec. 5. The insignia, commonly known as the combat patch, was presented to Vanguard Soldiers in a ceremony recognizing Soldiers deployed to a combat zone. Col. Thomas James, commander, 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., told the Soldiers how special it was to be a part of the ceremony. James made his way through the formation shaking hands and personally congratulating each Soldier. "This is a special day for all of us," James said. "You and I wear on our right shoulder a patch Audie Murphy wore, that Sgt. 1st Class Paul Smith wore, and the thousands and thousands of other Marne Warriors that served in World War I to the present have worn." After the ceremony, James gathered the Soldiers in an impromptu horseshoe for-

mation in front of the Brigade Headquarters and said the Vanguard Soldiers are making history just by being here. Command Sgt. Maj. Louis Torres, command sergeant major, 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., echoed James' sentiment and told the Soldiers to be proud of the patch they now wear and to wear it with pride. "You earned your combat patch, so wear it proud like everybody else before you did," Torres said. "Do not ever think, no matter wherever you work or whatever section you work in, that you didn't earn this combat patch." This is the 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div.'s second tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom since its activation in 2004.

Pfc. Amanda McBride

Sgt. Dameon Dugar, assigned to HHC, stands in formation during the patch ceremony held Dec. 5. The Shoulder Sleeve Insignia for Former Wartime Service patch, know as the combat patch, is given to deployed Soldiers in a combat zone.



A moment in Marne History: Murray, Jr., Whitely awarded MoH

Sasha McBrayer
Fort Stewart Museum

In December 1944, two Soldiers were recognized with the nation's highest award, the Medal of Honor. The Marne Soldiers earned the honor in separate locations, 1st Lt. Charles P. Murray, Jr, Company C, 30th Infantry, near Kayserberg, France, on Dec. 16; and 1st Lt. Eli Whitely, Company L, 15th Infantry, in Sigolsheim, France, Dec. 27. The citations can be read at the Fort Stewart Museum.

Murray, Jr.
For commanding Co. C, 30th Infantry, displaying supreme courage and heroic initiative near



1st Lt. Charles P. Murray, Jr., Co. C, 30th Inf

Kaysersberg, France, on Dec. 16, 1944, while leading a reinforced platoon into enemy territory. Descending into a valley beneath hilltop positions held by our troops, he observed a force of 200 Germans pouring deadly mortar, bazooka, machinegun, and small arms fire into an American battalion occupying the crest of the ridge. The enemy's position in a sunken road, though hidden from the ridge, was open to a flank attack by 1st Lt. Murray's patrol but he hesitated to commit so small a force to battle with the superior and strongly disposed enemy. Crawling out ahead of his troops to a vantage point, he called by radio for artillery fire. His shells bracketed the German force, but when he was about to correct the range his radio went dead. He returned to his patrol, secured grenades and a rifle to launch them and went back to his self-appointed outpost. His first shots disclosed his position; the enemy directed heavy fire against him as he methodically fired his missiles into the narrow defile. Again he returned to his patrol. With an automatic rifle and ammunition, he once more moved to his exposed position. Burst after burst he fired into the enemy, killing 20, wounding many others, and completely disorganizing its ranks, which began to withdraw. He prevented the removal of three German mortars by knocking

out a truck. By that time a mortar had been brought to his support. 1st Lt. Murray directed fire of this weapon, causing further casualties and confusion in the German ranks. Calling on his patrol to follow, he then moved out toward his original objective, possession of a bridge and construction of a roadblock. He captured 10 Germans in foxholes. An eleventh, while pretending to surrender, threw a grenade which knocked him to the ground, inflicting eight wounds. Though suffering and bleeding profusely, he refused to return to the rear until he had chosen the spot for the block and had seen his men correctly deployed. By his single-handed attack on an overwhelming force and by his intrepid and heroic fighting, 1st Lt. Murray stopped a counterattack, established an advance position against formidable odds, and provided an inspiring example for the men of his command. **Whitely** While leading his platoon on Dec. 27, 1944, in savage house-to-house fighting through the fortress town of Sigolsheim, France, he attacked a building through a street swept by withering mortar and automatic weapons fire. He was hit and severely wounded in the arm and shoulder; but he charged into the house alone and

killed its two defenders. Hurling smoke and fragmentation grenades before him, he reached the next house and stormed inside, killing two and capturing 11 of the enemy. He continued leading his platoon in the extremely dangerous task of clearing hostile troops from strong points along the street until he reached a building held by fanatical Nazi troops. Although suffering from wounds which had rendered his left arm useless, he advanced on this strongly defended house, and after blasting out a wall with bazooka fire, charged through a hail of bullets. Wedging his submachinegun under his uninjured arm, he rushed into the house through the hole torn by his rockets, killed five of the enemy and forced the remaining 12 to surrender. As he emerged to continue his fearless attack, he was again hit and critically wounded. In agony and with one eye pierced by a shell fragment, he shouted for his men to follow him to the next house. He was determined to stay in the fighting, and remained at the head of his platoon until forcibly evacuated. By his disregard for personal safety, his aggressiveness while suffering from severe wounds, his determined leadership and superb courage, 1st Lt. Whiteley killed nine Germans, captured 23 more and

spearheaded an attack which cracked the core of enemy resistance in a vital area.



Photos courtesy of Fort Stewart Museum
1st Lt. Eli Whitely, Co. L, 15th Inf

"We are losing these veterans in large numbers every day," Penland said. "Therefore, the saddest part is that we are losing that part of the WWII history and records of their service stories. We need to make the effort to capture these veterans' stories." Jack V. White, now resides in Long County but has vivid memories of Pearl Harbor, said he was a radio operator in the Navy aboard the USS Conyngham (positioned behind the USS Arizona) when Pearl Harbor was bombed. He operated a 50

caliber machine gun from his ship after the initial bombing by the Japanese. White has attended many of the reunions and anniversaries at the Pearl Harbor Memorial Site. "In 1991, I attended the 50th Anniversary with more than 3,000 surviving veterans, White said. "Again in 2001, I joined more than 600 veterans for the 60th anniversary gathering at the site. Last years 65th Anniversary was cancelled due to the lack of attendees. You have to realize that WWII Veterans are in their eighties and are limited in what they can attend and par-

ticipate in these days." Also in attendance was Clinton Henry, U.S. Navy, who was on a U.S. LST Ship during Pearl Harbor in 1941. He served in WWII, then Korean War and the Vietnam War. The third WWII veteran in attending was Graydon Martin, U.S. Army, who also served in the Korean War and Vietnam War. He was a young Soldier serving in WWII, but remembers the attacks on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese in 1941. He now resides in the Lake George area of Liberty County.

Family day kicks off 188th Bde's training, support

Maj. Valerie Meadows
188th Infantry Brigade, First Army Public Affairs

Over 500 Soldiers and Family members from across the state of Georgia gathered at Fort Stewart for a weekend of fun, sports, classes, and remembrance, Dec. 1 and 2.

The 188th Infantry Brigade, a First Army training unit, pulled in its Soldiers from Fort Gillem, Ga. in the Atlanta area and Stewart in order to "create an environment that inspires connections between the unit and our Families, to establish the foundation for an effective, vibrant, and needs-based Family readiness network," said Col. George Geczy, III, brigade commander.

He and his wife, Mindy Geczy, spearheaded the event, planned by his battalion commanders and staff, under the coordination of the brigade chaplain, Capt. David Clark.

"We want to get the Families together, find out what their readiness requirements are, give them relevant information ranging from finance to upcoming missions, build relations with the garrison, and most of all, have fun with our kids and Families," Clark explained.

The day started off with a 1.8 mile fun-run around James Brown Park in Hinesville, culminating at the Armed Services YMCA who provided their facilities, time, and effort to support the unit. Christina Anthony of the ASYMCA organized vendors, games, inflatables, and rides for the Soldiers and their Families. Canon Rooker of Richmond Hill won the Children's Run. Kent Smith of the 2nd Battalion, 349th Logistical Support, won the adult run. Hundreds of others participated in the walk.

After the run, the brigade moved over to the AS YMCA basketball gym for a briefing on the upcoming mission, or as Geczy put it, "What mommy or daddy is going to be doing here and why it is important enough that they have to be gone from home for the next three months."

Standing on a wooden map of Stewart, each battalion commander explained what his unit's mission was in terms that the children could understand. Lt. Col. John Burnham, commander of 1st Battalion, 347th Combat Support, Combat Service Support, related his unit's maintenance duties to the changing of tires and oil in parents' cars.

Lt. Col. Terry Meyer spoke about his combat lifesavers, the emergency medical response Soldiers. Combat lifesavers have saved thousands of lives in Iraq with their training, Meyer said.

Soldiers and Family memebers then were briefed on finance, scams and fraud, Military One Source, teen Internet security, deployment stress, Tricare, parenting issues and anger management. A separate room was set aside for the teenagers known as the Teen Café, with several game sets, a popcorn machine, and videos.

After the classes, the Soldiers jumped right into the competitive sports to include flag football, Walley Ball (volley ball in a racquet ball court using the walls, a very fast paced

game), horseshoes, and basketball.

Outside, children played in the playground, on the inflatable obstacle course and slide, dipped their hands in wax to make colored hands, ate funnel cakes, and rode the horses brought by one of the vendors. There was an arts and crafts tent where Families and Soldiers painted four-inch marble squares, each dedicated to a Stewart Soldier killed in Iraq.

Once the sports competitions were done, Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Mayfield, brigade command sergeant major, passed out certificates to the winners. Chaplain Jonathon Fisher held the raffle drawing for a \$100 gift certificate. Willie Sibert was the winner. Fisher also raffled off a handful of toys for the children.

On Sunday, Clark led a Sunrise Service at Cottrell Field. Opened with a selection of songs by the Fort Stewart Youth Challenge Choir, the non-denominational service continued with an inspirational reading from Charlotte Seabrook of the 188th Brigade. Sgt. 1st Class Kent Smith read from the Old Testament, and Fisher sang a medley of devotional songs.

The Memorial Remembrance Ceremony followed the service. With a greeting by Jeff Fornshell, 3rd Infantry Division, followed by a rendition of the Star Spangled Banner by Staff Sgt. Patricia Isaac, Geczy led the brigade in the Soldier's Creed. The guest speaker was the Honorable Jack Kingston, congressman for Georgia District 1.

After the ceremony, the Soldiers and Families of the Brigade placed the memorial tiles they had made the day before beneath the tree dedicated to the fallen Soldier who they had selected to remember.

Some Soldiers had special requests, a friend or a Soldier from their previous unit. The Soldiers and Families walked along the Warrior's Walk, taking time to read the names of the Soldiers who had given their lives for freedom.

After the memorial, the brigade met at Club Stewart for a Christmas buffet brunch. During the brunch, Geczy promoted seven Soldiers: Sgt. Dong Vue, Sgt. 1st Class Lester Leggette, Maj. Kermit Thomas, Maj. Pete Hu, Maj. Thomas Hayes, and Lt. Col. James West.

Rounding out the weekend was a change of command ceremony for the Logistical Support Battalion. After promoting Col. Robert Thompson and recognizing his wife, LaTonya Thompson for all of her volunteer work as the Family Readiness Advisor for the brigade as well as her bat-



Maj. Valerie Meadows

Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Mayfield scores a touchdown during the 188th Inf. Bde. Commander's Connections Conference flag football tournament.

talion, Geczy passed the battalion guidon to Maj. Anna L. Rego, the incoming LSB commander. Thompson will be moving to an Army Reserve unit in Florida.

The 188th Brigade is leading the team of four First Army brigades that are providing mobilization and deployment training for the 76th Infantry Brigade Combat Team from the Indiana National Guard for their deployment to Iraq.

They will be arriving at Stewart in January and will soon deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Using the Theater Immersion concept of tough, realistic, stressful, 24-7 training, the First Army team is going to conduct training that simulates the actual conditions and missions they will face in theater as closely as possible.

Other units in the First Army team include 4th Cavalry Brigade from Fort Knox, Ky.; the 158th Infantry Brigade from Patrick Air Force Base, Fla.; and the 205th Brigade who is conducting the training at Camp Atterbury, Ind. The three brigades who will be at Stewart (188th, 158th, and 4th) will be running the ranges, classes, forward operating bases, and all training and administrative support, as well as the liaison with the Stewart garrison.

The 76th will be bringing approximately 3,000 Soldiers here. The three training brigades will have approximately 1,000 Soldiers to train and support them. They include active Army, mobilized Reserves, part time Reserves, and active Guard and Reserve Soldiers.

The vast majority of these Soldiers are experienced non-commissioned officers and officers who have served at least one mobilization and deployment. Many are former 3rd Inf. Div. or 48th Inf. Div. Soldiers who deployed out of Stewart themselves. They know training, they know the theater, and are determined to give the 76th Soldiers the best possible training to ensure their mission accomplishment and survival.



Above: A young artist paints a marble stone to place under the memorial tree for a fallen Soldier at Fort Stewart's Warrior's Walk during the 188th Inf. Bde. Commander's Connections Conference. (Photo by Maj. Valerie Meadows)

Left: Congressman Jack Kingston and Col. George Geczy, III honor a fallen Soldier from Fort Stewart at Warrior's Walk, Dec. 2. (Photo by Debi Meadows)

Help serve the Army Family's needs with ACHPP

Special to the Frontline

Dear Soldiers, Family Members, DA Civilians, Retirees, DoD Contractors,

At this time of the year, we are particularly reminded of the importance of reaching out to others, both on the installation and in our local communities.

One of the ways the military community of Fort Stewart can impact the quality of life for all those who live and work on the installation is through the Army Community Heritage

Partnership Program. The goal of this program is to better serve the needs of the total Army Family by enhancing Hinesville shopping, restaurants, recreational and entertainment opportunities.

As a member of the Fort Stewart military community you may receive an email with a link attached to a survey about your perceptions, experiences, and interests in downtown Hinesville. The results of this survey will help provide direction as we continue with the development of this program.

Your candid comments are truly appreciated. I want to

encourage you to take a few minutes and share your thoughts.

The Army is strong because our Army Team makes a difference in the community and to the Nation. Thank you for your continued support.

Colonel Todd A. Buchs
Stewart – Hunter Garrison Commander

Avoid holiday fire hazards

Installation safety office

As the holidays draw near, decorative lighting and special effects become important components of the festive season. Christmas trees, in particular, are a traditional part of the season.

Although they are special, trees pose a definite safety risk. If you're using a natural tree this year, reduce the risk of a tree fire by taking a few precautions.

Choose a freshly cut green tree, not one that has dried out through weeks of storage. If you are buying one from a tree lot, tap the trunk on the ground; if several needles fall off, it's too dry. Needles that bend and are not easily pulled off indicate a fresh tree.

Consider a potted Christmas tree so you can plant it in your yard once the holidays are over. Before setting it up, cut one to two inches diagonally off the butt. The tree will draw water more easily from a fresh cut. Stand the tree in a tub or bucket of water and keep the tree trunk immersed to prevent the tree from drying out.

Select a safe location for the tree, away from drapes and curtains and from drying and heat-

ing sources such as registers, radiators and television sets.

Don't block doors or windows, which might be used to escape in an emergency and never, put a tree near a fireplace. Use a tree-stand with widespread legs for better balance and a large water reserve in which to immerse the tree butt. Check the water level every day and add more as required.

Check your Christmas lights for defects. Spread them out on a non-flammable surface before installing them. Make sure there are no broken bulbs, all-electrical cords are free of cuts or frays and the plugs are in good condition. Use only UL-listed lights, and no more than three strands linked together. Extension cords should never be placed under carpets or where they could be a tripping hazard. Don't leave the Christmas tree lights on if there is no one in the room.

If the tree begins to lose an excessive amount of needles, remove it immediately. Never burn your tree in the fireplace. These safety tips will help prevent your holiday plans from going up in smoke!

FORSCOM Cdr calls for safety

General Charles C. Campbell
Army Forces Command

The holiday season is a special time for us all to honor traditions, reflect on the many advantages we enjoy as Americans, and renew our hope for a bright future. We in the Army Family have an opportunity to re-commit ourselves to the ideals our nation holds dear - peace, freedom, and good will toward mankind. Those meals are especially dear to us, as we fully understand their cost

Thanks to your willingness to serve voluntarily and shoulder the solemn responsibility of public service, our land and way of life are protected and continue to set the example to those around the world who seek dignity, opportunity, and freedom from tyranny. Thanks to your efforts as an American Soldier, as a supportive Family member, or as a DA civil-

ian employee, our country and our fellow citizens are defended against the forces of fear, hatred, and oppression. My hope is that you find encouragement and strength in knowing how many people are inspired by your service, your dedication, your professionalism, your self-sacrifice, and your courage.

As you gather together with friends and Family during the coming days, I ask that you keep in your thoughts your fellow Soldiers who cannot be with their loved ones this year because they are doing their duty far from home. Take a moment to pause and take pride in them and in the bond you share with them.

As you and your Family travel during this holiday period, remember to keep safety in your plans and prepare for unforeseen emergencies. It is important that we bring every member back safely.

I wish you a safe/enjoyable holiday season and a happy, fulfilling new year.

Stewart congratulates DARE essay winner, Lauren Prox

Many of you are familiar with the D.A.R.E. program that is taught in our area schools. One of the program requirements is that each student writes an essay in order to graduate. Essays are judged by teachers, D.A.R.E. officers and Fort Stewart Police Department personnel. One overall winner is selected from each school and they are awarded a prize.

The overall winners are Kayla Asher from Brittin Elementary, Madison Fuller from Diamond Elementary, and Lauren Prox from Kessler Elementary. The following essay is written by Lauren Prox. Check out the Dec. 20 issue of the Frontline to read Madison Fuller's winning essay.



Lauren Prox

Drugs affect different parts of the body. The main parts that I learned about are the brain, lungs, heart, and liver. In DARE, I learned the short term effect of drugs is mainly loss of coordination. The long term effects are damage to some or all main organ parts. In addition, it is illegal to buy drugs.

Some people don't know how to say no to drugs. In DARE, I learned that there are a lot of different ways to say no to drugs. I can say no by screaming "NO!" Really loud. I can also practice by saying no to myself in a mirror or taking turns saying no with a friend.

Violence is an act of aggression. Violence can come from peer pressure. In DARE, I learned peer pressure

is when people try to get me to do things I know I shouldn't do. I can get into a violent situation by fighting and joining gangs. I believe that I should find other things to do instead of joining in on violence, so I catch butterflies.

In life, I learned that sometimes there are so many decisions for me to make. So I ask myself, what steps do I take to make the right decisions? I learned by using the DARE decision making model I can make the right decisions. The D stands for define. A stands for assess. R stands for respond. E stands for evaluate. Define means think about what the problem is. Assess means think about your choices. Respond stands for pick a choice. Evaluate means think about if you made a good or bad choice.

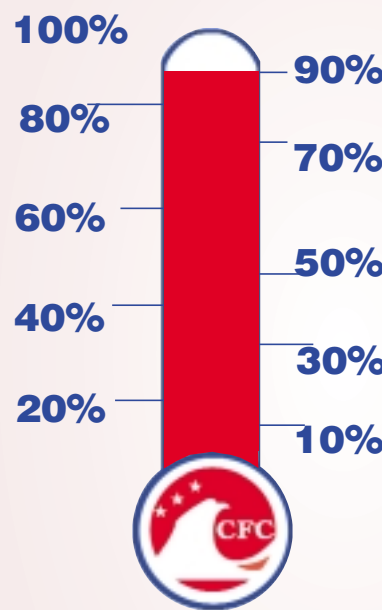
I have learned so many things about drugs and violence from Sergeant Thompson and Sergeant Barron. They are great teachers. They taught me that I should never do drugs. Now, I choose to be drug free.

My Pledge

I pledge allegiance to my life, to stay drug free day and night. I will share my knowledge of drugs and alcohol with everyone I meet, because with drugs and alcohol your life cannot be complete.

Stewart – Hunter CFC 2007

Our Goal: \$300,000



STEWART-HUNTER HAS CONTRIBUTED A TOTAL OF \$266,605.92 FOR 89 PERCENT OF OUR GOAL AS OF DEC. 5.



Its not to late to help

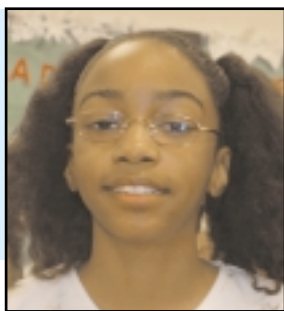
Date extended until Dec. 14

Marne Voices Speak Out

What do you want for Christmas?

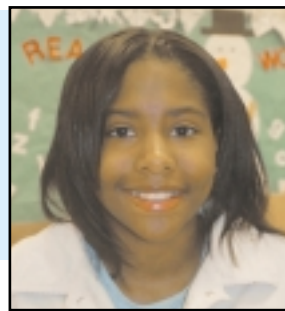
"A Golden Retriever puppy."

Jade Turner
5th Grade, Kessler Elementary



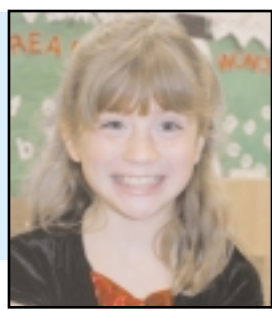
"An MP4 player and a Nintendo DS Lite."

Quentina Brown
6th Grade, Kessler Elementary



"I want my dad to be safe in Iraq, and when my mom has the baby, I want the baby to be healthy."

Jasmine Smith
3rd Grade, Kessler Elementary



"A Nintendo DS."

Courtney Green
6th Grade, Kessler Elementary



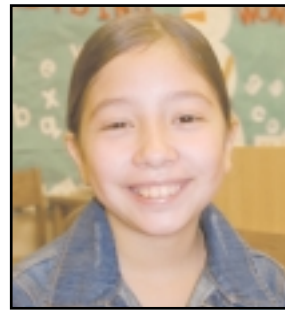
"A Nintendo WII game system."

Briyanna Lyon
4th Grade, Kessler Elementary



"I would like for my dad to not deploy to Iraq."

Lisa De la Cruz
5th Grade, Kessler Elementary



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Attn: The Frontline, Editor
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The Frontline

112 Vilseck Rd., Suite 109
Bldg. 419
Ft. Stewart, Ga. 31314

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4th Bde. staff writer — Pfc. Amanda McBride
4th Bde. staff writer — Pvt. Jerome Arp
Avn. Bde. NCOIC — Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Mills
Avn. Bde. staff writer — Pfc. Monica Smith
3rd Sust. Bde. NCOIC — Master Sgt. Rodney Williams
3rd Sust. Bde. staff writer — Pfc. Gaelen Lowers

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Assignment manager — Jennifer Scales
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Hunter Army Airfield Public Affairs

Hunter Army Airfield PAO — Steven Hart
Assistant PAO — Nancy Gould
Public Affairs Assistant — Kaytrina Curtis

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1/15th Infantry discovers cache in haystack

Sgt. Natalie Rostek
3rd HBCT Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE HAMMER, Iraq – Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment uncovered a weapons cache Dec. 1 in Al Ja’ara while delivering kerosene to local citizens.

According to 1st Lt. Matt Barwick, from Lanham, Md., fire support officer for Co. B, Soldiers were delivering 15,000 liters of kerosene to the village sheik. While conducting the transfer they received information regarding the location of a possible weapons cache.

“We went to the location and there was a stack of hay about six or seven feet high,” he said. “Four Soldiers started digging.”

Barwick said Pfc. Mark Hayes, from Louisville, Ky., Pvt. Phillip Crum, from Miami, Fla., Spc. Mishael Francois, from Trinidad, Africa, and Pfc. Steven Moya, from Redding, Pa., dug through

the entire pile of hay to discover two 75mm rockets, 17 grenades, 2 mortars, 10 pounds of a stripped propellant, and one two-liter bottle of explosive material.

“Finding this cache is a message to extremists in this area. They are not safe and they can’t hide weapons. We will find them. This also severely disrupts extremist operations in Al Ja’ara,” Barwick said.

Francois said he had an overwhelming feeling come over him when, after digging through the haystack, he touched objects that were not supposed to be there.

“It’s a rush,” Francois said. “I felt like this is what we need to get more information. This is what we need to put these criminals away. We got ‘em! I felt like we were doing the right thing.”

Although excited about his find, Francois was humble.

“It’s what we do,” he said. “We go out there and look for this stuff. If we find it, we find it. If we don’t find it, we go out there next time and try again.”



Sgt. 1st Class Robert Timmons

Pvt. George Delgado, an infantryman with Company A, 4th Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment Combined Arms Battalion “Tuskers,” 3rd Infantry Division, keeps an eye out for anything suspicious outside of St. George’s Church in southern Baghdad’s Doura region Dec. 1.

Hawr Rajab CLCs turn in explosives cache to new unit

Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky
2nd BCT Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE KALSU, Iraq – As a new unit transitions in, Hawr Rajab Concerned Local Citizens continue to provide Coalition Forces with a helping hand in providing security for their city.

The Concerned Local Citizens turned in a cache at Enduring Checkpoint 20 in Hawr Rajab Nov. 27 consisting of seven blasting caps, 13 pressure plates, two fire extinguishers and 28 two-liter bottles filled with homemade explosives.

An explosive ordnance disposal team safely destroyed the contents

in a controlled detonation.

Earlier this month, Soldiers of the 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division began replacing Paratroopers of the 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment, 4th BCT (Airborne), 25th Inf. Div., Fort Richardson, Alaska, who are redeploying home after a 14-month


combat tour.

Capt. Greg Curry, Troop A commander, 6/8th Cav., said he hopes to continue the positive relationships set by the 1/40th Cav. Regt. and build on their hard work.

Curry, a Walnut Creek, Ohio, native, said his Soldiers are committed to the Hawr Rajab people and will maintain a 24-hour presence in the city and continue to build security sites to prevent insurgents threatening the local population.

The same day in Hawr Rajab, seven Iraqis suspected of insurgent activities were detained during a 6/8th Cav. Regt. operation.

The detainees were brought back to FOB Falcon for questioning.



Ft. Stewart/Hunter Morale, Welfare and Recreation

Trees for Troops

14, 15, 17 Dec – 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., FS Leisure Activities 767-3521
14 & 15 Dec – 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Hunter Auto Crafts 315-6244
The Christmas Spirit Foundation and FEDEX Inc. are sponsoring a Christmas tree giveaway. Active duty military are eligible to receive one free tree per Family. Trees will be given away on a first-come, first-serve basis. 767-6212.

Holiday Hayride

14 Dec -- 6-9 p.m., Corkan Family Recreation at Stewart and ACS Parking Lot at Hunter
Enjoy all the seasons’ festivities with the ones you love. There will be caroling on a hayride to see the season’s lights, mini golf in a festive holiday park at Stewart, sitting on Santa’s lap and whispering your deepest secrets, hot chocolate, cookies and punch to tame the winter blues around a warm fire. All activities at Stewart are on a first come-first serve basis. \$5.00 per family. 767-4273/315-9554.

Youth Holiday Tournament

15 Dec – 1 p.m., Jordan Youth Gym
3 on 3 basketball tournament, door prizes, dunking contest, hip-hop dance presentations, step-performance and trophy ceremony. Open to ages 9-18. Sign-up starts 10 Dec. 767-2815.

ACS Outreach Holiday Event/ New Family Orientation

20 Dec – 9 a.m., Soldier Service Center 2nd Floor, Room 2074
Come learn important information about the installation, meet Santa and receive free baked goods and much more. 767-9176/5058.

Kids Scavenger Hunt at Cypress Sam’s Treehouse

9 Jan – 3-6 p.m., Cypress Sam’s Treehouse
Children are invited to come search through 6,000 colored balls to find the “special” balls and win prizes. The cost is \$2 per child. For more information, call 767-4273.

New York City Trip Sign-Up Deadline

1 Feb – New York, NY
Join us for a grand time in the ‘Big Apple’ scheduled from 13-15 June. The trip will include a Broadway show, tours of the city, tour of the Statue of Liberty, Ground Zero and much more. Register now to reserve your space. The cost is \$849 per person, which includes airfare, hotel, taxes, and arrangements. Payment options are available and a payment of \$150 is due by Feb. 1. 767-2841.

MWR Briefs Cont. —

New Year's Eve Party at Rocky's

Come enjoy a champagne toast, party favors, entertainment in both rooms and balloon drop at midnight. The party will be held from 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. and there is no charge to attend. Open to DoD cardholders only. For more information call 767-8715 or 368-2212.

New Year's Eve at Club Stewart

Come ring in the New Year with champagne (first 500 people), party favors, enter-

tainment (70's, 80's, 90's and current music) in different rooms, and balloon drop at midnight. The event is 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. at Club Stewart. The event will include a Southern cuisine dinner and breakfast option. The cost is \$15. For more information, call 368-2212.

Additional New Year's Festivites

Join in the fun at Cypress Sam's and Marne Lanes New Year's Eve with affordable Family fun. For more information, call 767-4866.

Winterfest Trip slated

Do you love to ski? Take a trip with us to

Blowing Rock, N.C. from Jan. 25-27. The cost is \$200 per room plus ski lift and equipment expenses.

The maximum occupancy for a room is four. For more information, call 767-2841.

New York City Trip slated

Join us for a grand time in the "Big Apple."

The trip will include a Broadway show, tours of the city, tour of the Statue of Liberty, Ground Zero and much more.

The trip will take place from June 13-15, but register now to reserve your space. The

cost is \$849 per person. The cost includes airfare, hotel, taxes, and some food. Payment options are available and a payment of \$150 is due by Feb. 1.

Don't miss out on this great trip. For more information, call 767-2841.

Kids scavenge at Cypress Sam's

Children are invited to come search through 6,000 colored balls to find the "special" balls and win prizes.

The hunt will be held from 3 to 6 p.m., Jan 9. The cost is \$2 per child. For more information, call 767-4273.

Free tax filing on Stewart-Hunter

Special to the Frontline

A dedicated and trained staff is ready to prepare and file your tax return starting Jan. 22 at no charge at the Marne Tax Center, 1067 Gulick Avenue, building 617 and the Hunter Legal Center at building 1211.

Your tax return is filed electronically and if a refund is due, you will receive it usually within seven to ten business days.

The service is available to all active duty Soldiers, their dependents and retirees and continues to April 15. The hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Important documents you need to bring with you, if they apply, include: W2 for all wages received; previous year state and fed-

eral income tax return; military identification for yourself and spouse; receipts for charitable contributions; social security card or memo from Social Security Administration for members, spouse and dependents; property tax receipts; home mortgage interest statement; power of attorney; student loan interest statement; divorce decree; proof of dependent care, and educational expenses; interest income statement (e.g., 1099); HUD 1 statement (if home purchased in IRA/TSP contribution statements in 2007); dividend income statement (e.g., 1099DIV); and statements reflecting capital gains/loss and educator expenses.

For more information, call Hunter at 315-3675.

Support Boy Scouts' holiday donation drive

Special to the Frontline

The Boy Scouts of America, Troop 454 are taking in donations of non perishables, perishables, clothing, blankets, and toys.

They ask that all donations be in decent condition. The Troop will be

taking in donations Dec. 15.

If you would like to donate but can't make it that day, please contact Michelle Burkard, scoutmaster of Troop 454, at 369-5589 or 230-2822.

All donations will profit less fortunate military Families.

703rd BSB dons 3rd Inf. Div. combat patch



Courtesy Photo
Lt. Col. John Chadbourne, commander, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, presents Capt. Cecil Stinnie, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, with a 3rd Infantry Division Combat Patch Dec. 2 at Forward Operating Base Kalsu.

Capt. Constance Quinlan
4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE KALSU, Iraq- Soldiers of the 703rd Brigade Support Battalion joined the honored ranks of Dog Face Soldiers Dec.2. The ceremony was held one day after the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division assumed control of the Vanguard area of operation.

As a light drizzle heralded the onset of the rainy season, four companies of maintainers gathered outside the Kalsu Aid Station to hold separate combat patch ceremonies. The ceremonies were presided over by Lt. Col John Chadbourne, commander, 703rd BSB, and Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Harry Jeffries, command sergeant major of the 703rd BSB.

Chadbourne expressed his pride for the battalion, assuring the Army's newest veterans that the occasion was well-deserved.

"[This] may not feel like combat, but you are under a constant threat, and you should

never diminish what you are doing," Chadbourne said. "Everything you do impacts the mission of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, the 3rd Infantry Division and the United States Army."

Chadbourne added that each Soldier should take pride in joining the small group of American warriors throughout history who have stepped up and answer their nation's call in a time of need.

After the ceremony, all the Soldiers will wear the 3rd Inf. Div. shoulder sleeve insignia as combat patches while deployed. Jeffries explained that this gesture symbolizes Soldiers' pride in the unit with which they are currently serving in combat.

The 703rd BSB traces its combat roots to 1942, when the then 703rd Ordnance Maintenance Company supported the 3rd Infantry Division in World War II. Its most recent tour was in 2005, supporting the Vanguard Brigade in Operation Iraqi Freedom III.

Nigerian native is patriotic American, urges to stay Army

Sgt. Jason Stadel
2nd BCT Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE KALSU, Iraq – To call Staff Sgt. Obinna Awusah a good Soldier would be an understatement according to members of his company. His peers call him a good Soldier who goes the extra mile to accomplish a mission and always places the needs of others before his own, all with a smile on his face and large sense of patriotism in his heart.

Awusah, a native of Nigeria, immigrated to the United States in 1981 to enroll in college. Awusah didn't have a hard childhood growing up in the African nation, and said that because his parents were "well off," they were able to send him and his brother to the U.S. for an education.

Awusah, a generator mechanic in Company B, 26th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, earned a bachelor's degree in electronics from Wayne State University in Detroit. He settled into a civilian job in Maryland and became a supervisor at an electronics company. However, Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in the summer of 1990 changed Awusah's life.

In 1991, Awusah was watching the news in his Maryland home when he saw a woman crying during an interview because she had just been called back to the Army from the inactive ready reserve. She was a new mom and being called back to service to deploy.

Awusah recalled feeling so bad that he called a recruiter and asked if the war was so bad that moms had to be taken

away from their babies; the recruiter said it was. Awusah said that if the Army needed him, he would help.

"That's just how he is; he really cares for people," said Sgt. 1st Class Robert Spears, Awusah's squad leader.

Later that afternoon Awusah was in the recruiter's office in Brandywine, Md.

"That was the fastest I've seen paperwork get done in the Army," Awusah said. "I would have gone to basic training that night if I would have got my GT (general technician) exam done."

Sixteen years later Awusah, who came to the 26th BSB in Jan. 2007 and is currently on his second Operation Iraqi Freedom deployment, is an advocate of what the United States and the Army can provide.

"Sergeant Awusah is the kind of guy that brightens your day no matter what is going on," Lt. Col. Mark Weinerth, 26th BSB commander, said.

Awusah attributes all of his gains in life to becoming an American citizen and to joining the Army. He encourages his Soldiers to take advantage of the programs the Army offers such as taking college courses.

Awusah said the Army opens up more possibilities for Soldiers. He said the military allows a Soldier to choose many career paths in the civilian world.

He is also an ally for any re-enlistment counselor.

When a Soldier is thinking about leaving the Army, Awusah makes sure they have an outlook for the future.

"I encourage them to re-enlist based on their plans. If they have a good plan for leaving the Army then I encourage that.

I try and give them examples; I let them know the Army is the kindest community you'll have," he said. "I make sure they know that other organizations don't have programs like AER (Army Emergency Relief). I let them know that if you need help the Army is always there to help; most organizations won't do that."

Spears said Awusah takes a positive approach to everything.

"He's always smiling and laughing," Spears said. "The only thing that upsets him is when leaders don't take care of Soldiers. Greed is not involved in his life. He's caring and he has concern for his fellow Soldiers."

If a new Soldier arrives to the unit, Awusah will make the Soldier feel welcome.

"The best way to compliment them is to shake their hand and tell them they are good American Soldiers. You need to thank them for sacrificing their youthful age for their country," Awusah said.


When it comes to Soldiering skills Awusah also sets the bar high. At 44 years of age he can still run about 14 minutes in the two-mile run during the Army physical fitness test.

"He's a PT stud," Spears said. "He definitely leads from the front. I knew right away that he was going to be a plus for the company."

In four years Awusah will be eligible for retirement but his squad leader doesn't think Awusah will be ready to leave the organization that in his words has given him so much.

"He'll probably stay in the Army until Uncle Sam puts him out," Spears said.

Border Patrol Agents



Working as a Border Patrol Agent is not a job, it is a career. The Office of Border Patrol is looking for men and women just like you; the right men and women to protect our country's southwest border. As a Border Patrol Agent, you will enjoy an excellent salary and the great benefits of a career as a federal law enforcement officer. Come work in an exciting environment with wide-open spaces and opportunities for personal and professional growth.

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- Pass a background investigation, drug test, medical and fitness examination

Please apply online at: www.borderpatrolagentsapply.com
 Please call toll free: 1-877-BP-INFO-1 (1-877-274-6361) or TTY: 1-800-887-5506

Please reference the following recruitment code on the application: 2335



Sgt. Jason Stadel
Staff Sgt. Obinna Awusah (sitting) discusses fixing a generator with one of his non-commissioned officers, Sgt. Omar Lopez. Awusah has been a generator mechanic in the Army for 16 years.

Family Engagement Kit puts Families, safety first

Special to the Frontline

FORT RUCKER, Ala. – Army officials are empowering Family members to take an active role in implementing safety practices to protect their Families and loved ones returning home from deployments.

The Army recognizes that Army Families are a highly powerful group, capable of positively influencing how Soldiers and Family members think. The Army's new Family Engagement Kit raises Families' awareness of the leading indicators in accidents while passing along the "what" and "how" of best practices. Armed with these newly created tools, Family members are afforded active involvement in their Soldiers' safety.

The U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center study of accident and associated statistics, indicates when Soldiers return from a deployment or controlled environment, the rigors and oversight provided by leaders is diminished.

During fiscal 2007, 186 Soldiers died within one year of returning from deployments. Approximately 30 percent of the deaths occurred within the first 30 days of post-deployment and 63 percent within the first six months. Of the 186 fatalities, 145 involved privately owned vehicles during off-duty hours. Army safety officials are convinced that

oversight, control and structure are beneficial to achieve an accident-free environment. The USACRC's collective challenge is to formulate tools that target safety and risk management as a "way of life" for application when Soldiers are off duty.

"As leaders, we know that direct engagement with our Soldiers makes a positive difference in their safety," said Brig. Gen. Bill Forrester, director of Army safety and commanding general of the USACRC. "No one knows Soldiers better than their Families and there are few organizations better positioned than Families to influence Soldiers to make safer choices and take fewer risks."

Forrester added that the USACRC believes it is extremely difficult to look a spouse or child in the eye and tell them you are not going to wear your helmet or a seat belt because you don't care enough to stay alive for them.

"The Family Engagement Kit features tools that Family members can use to engage their loved ones in best safety practices in order to help protect them," said Forrester. "Many take very little time or effort, and the payoff is huge."

In all, the kit includes six tools for post-deployment best practices. One such tool is the Travel Risk Planning System, better known as TRiPS. The aim of TRiPS is to reduce the risk of accidents when traveling by POV, the

No. 1 killer of Soldiers.

Another potentially life-saving tool included in the kit is the Motorcycle/ATV Agreement. This tool encourages Families and their Soldiers to discuss the hazards and safety measures associated with riding motorcycles or all-terrain vehicles.

These web-based tools are self-explanatory, self-supporting with PowerPoint briefs containing associated talking points.

The Army's goal is to put these tools into the hands and empower Army Family Team Building trainers, Family Readiness Group leaders, brigade-level safety professionals, BOSS leaders, parents, and individual Family members to keep our Army team safe, Forrester added.

Families are encouraged to embrace the Family Engagement Kit as another tool supporting one common desire – safer Soldiers and Families.

"Family involvement is essential, so I ask for engagement with your loved one," Forrester said. "With your help, we can better protect our Nation's most precious assets – our



Soldiers."

For more information about the Family Engagement Kit, visit the USACRC Web site at <https://cra.army.mil/familyengagement>.

GATES

Gates noted several specific improvements, including many refugees returning to Iraq, more international investment there, and 70,000 Iraqis "who have taken it upon themselves to defend their neighborhoods."

The secretary emphasized that, while weakened, terrorists in Iraq haven't been beaten, and he cited a migration of terrorists to other parts of the country now experiencing an up-tick in violence. Among them is the northern city of Mosul, which he visited recently. Gates met with Multi-national Division North and provincial reconstruction team leaders there to learn about their efforts to stop al-Qaida from establishing a new foothold there.

Army Col. Tony Thomas, Multi-national Division North's deputy commander, described successes and challenges in his unit's area of responsibility, a vast seven-province region with a diverse population that makes it "a microcosm of Iraq."

That diversity has made the "awakening" among the local population less dramatic than in Anbar, Thomas said. He called the restive Diyala province and the fact that al-Qaida operatives may be seeking refuge there among the biggest concerns in the region.

Gates said the commanders in Mosul told him they're "having a continuing challenge," but the threat they're now facing appears to be far less sophisticated than in the past.

In cases where Coalition Forces once faced one or two dozen opponents at a time, they now typically face far fewer, he said.

"So the nature of the threat has changed, even though the challenge remains," Gates said.

Gates hailed progress being made in training and equipping Iraq's security forces. He also lauded vigilance these troops are demonstrating on the battlefield. "The Iraqi troops stand and fight," he said.

Thomas shared Gates' assessment of the "real growth of the Iraqi security forces" and said the challenge now is to continue their development to the point where they can operate independently, without U.S. assistance.

Gates said commanders in Mosul told him they're looking forward to the return of two Iraqi army battalions currently deployed to Baghdad as part of the troop surge there to confront terrorism. A U.S. battalion with the 1st Armored Division's Task Force Iron also has surged into Baghdad.

At no time during the discussion did commanders request additional U.S. troops in the region, Gates said.

In fact, he reported progress in bringing down the overall troop number in Iraq from its current 166,000. The first units not to be replaced returned home in September, and 1st Brigade Combat Team will begin redeploying this month, he said.

"And assuming that conditions remain as they are or continue to improve, an additional four battalion combat teams will withdraw from Iraq by late July," he said.

Army Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander of Multi-national Force Iraq, is expected to make further recommendations to President George Bush in the February-March timeframe regarding prospects for further troop reductions in the second half of the year.

Meanwhile, Gates urged Iraq's political leaders to take advantage of the improved security environment to move forward with other concerns, including reconciliation and legislation. He cited the Maliki government's recent signing of the U.S.-Iraq Declaration of Principles for Friendship and Cooperation agreement as a critical step that "sets the stage for future U.S.-Iraqi cooperation."

That document, signed Nov. 26, provides a framework for normalized relationships between the two countries. "More than ever, I believe that the goal of a secure, stable and democratic Iraq is within reach," Gates said.

"Much remains to be done," Gates acknowledged, but emphasized the importance of pushing forward. "We need to be patient, but we also need to be absolutely resolved in our desire to see the nascent signs of hope across Iraq expand and flourish so all Iraqis will enjoy peace and prosperity," he said.

From Page 1A

MOCK

Residents arrived armed with questions that ranged from the way deployments affect billing to baseline settings for their bills.

Homes in the New Gannam, New Savannah, and New Callaway housing areas on Hunter and Stewart's Liberty Woods, Southern Oaks and Coastal Ridge areas are affected by the mock billing, which began June 2007. The mock or sample billing period lasts for one year, with the first actual bill going out to residents June 2008.

The baseline is established using two methods. The first method is based on a Department of Energy model. During the mock billing phase the actual usage and baseline usage will be compared and analyzed and the baselines and analytical methods are validated, according to ista North America. The second baseline calculation is founded on the floor plans as well as the size and type of home. For example, if a resident has a Family of six living in a

four-bedroom home, and a Family of two live in a home with the same type of floor plan, their baseline will be approximately the same.

During the mock billing period residents receive a monthly statement that shows the consumption of the electricity and gas that was used or saved compared to their baseline.

The baseline is a billing structure that provides customers with an allowance of energy at a lower rate. Servicemembers on Hunter-Stewart are not individually responsible for water or sewer cost. The process is set up to help residents track their personal usage over the period of one year. This time frame allows Families to assess their usage and make adjustments accordingly.

Some residents questioned the usage of the money that will be saved by the Army when the actual billing begins. Joel Jacobs, department project director for GMH military housing on Hunter and Stewart, said

that dollars saved through conservation will go into new home construction.

Although many residents were unsure of how the billing will benefit them, Specialist Leroy Bartell, Company B, 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, Combat Aviation Brigade, who has a Family of five, said he was paying \$100-200 a month above his Basic Allowance for Housing while renting an apartment off post. "Then I also had to pay utilities," he said. When it comes to mock billing Bartell said, "I'm planning to make money."

Conversely, Janine Stidley, a Family member and mother of four, believes the mock billing briefing was informative, yet feels there are still issues left to be dealt with. "I think that my baseline should be higher than the same group that I am in, because we have a Family of six, where as my neighbor across the street has a Family of two, living in the same size and type of house," she said.

Coleen Sawaya, military operations

director for the third party billing company, ista North America, said that the mock billing program is mandated by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, in a national effort to conserve energy.

Invoices over the \$15 mark will be paid monthly by the resident to ista, said Sawaya. Any credits to residents over \$15 will be refunded monthly by ista to the residents' address.

Bartell said that living on post is a convenient, safe and quality way of life. "All around it's a better community," he said. "Yes, those who use more electricity are going to lose money, but those who use less electricity are going to make money."

Residents who have questions regarding mock billing can contact the Hunter GMH community center office at 459-2133, or Stewart's GMH community center office at 408-2460. The billing company ista North America can be reached by calling 1-800-569-3014 or by visiting their Web site aeistaNorthAmerica.com.

From Page 1A

Remember OPSEC for the Holidays

- When socializing at parties over the holiday's don't talk "shop" around those who don't have a need to know, and be wary of attempts to elicit information, even from friends and Family.
- Be alert to public work crews and other personnel requesting access to your residence. Verify their identity before allowing entry to your home.
- Report suspicious activity to the police or local law enforcement.

Family members of Deployed Soldiers

Don't wait until your Soldier returns to shower him with hugs and kisses!

Send a "Forward Shout" to let them know you miss them now, to stay safe, and hurry home. Call the Command Information Office at 767-3440 or 767-6604 to make an appointment to come by and send your message.

RCI

Stewart and Hunter encompasses close to 9000 barracks rooms. With just a hand full of personnel, the department was in great need of assistance in the evaluation part of the program.

"We are starting to take over the UPH program which includes the barracks," said Doug Delzeith, Quality Assurance Evaluator for RCI. "We are focusing on coming up with a consolidated barracks management plan for the whole installation. It is man-power extensive, so we've asked the Warrior in Transition unit to provide us with Soldiers who will help us assess the rooms in the barracks."

The RCI department has been working with these Soldiers since the start of the program. So far, they've been through about five buildings on Fort Stewart. Each building varies from 6-8 modules. One module consists of 12 barracks rooms. Soldiers have to go in each room and report what the room needs to function as a living space.

"They have to determine what needs to be repaired or fixed. If the room needs furniture replaced, painting, mainte-

nance work or any other infrastructure requirements needed," Delzeith said.

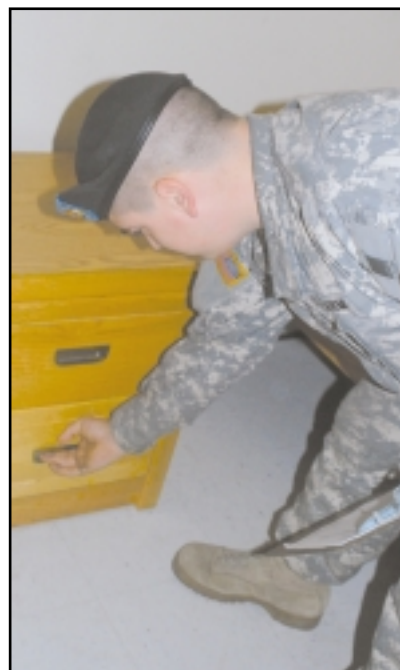
The process has to be very extensive because all the documentation is put into a database for the final UPH report of the barracks. Soldiers that do work with the RCI housing department are Soldiers who have illnesses or injuries but are well within their physical limits to do the job.

"This gives us something to do and look forward to each day," said Spec. Johnathan Coats Bravo Company WTU Battalion.

Each barracks room usually has two of everything. From two beds, closet spaces, to drawers and night stands, with a bathroom, sink area and refrigerator and microwave to share.

"We hope that when this whole project is done, each Soldier will have their own room and eventually we'll get there," Delzeith said. "We couldn't do this without the help of the WTU Soldiers and this also gives back to Soldiers in that it tells us what is needed to get fixed or replace, in return Soldiers will get a great place to live."

From Page 1A



Lina Satele

Spec. Jonathan Coats, Co. B, WTU, inspects a dresser while conducting an assesment on one the barracks rooms on Fort Stewart, Dec. 6.

Tech supply Soldiers help maintain CAB's aircraft



Pfc. Monica K. Smith

Sgt. Hendria Bailey, Co. D, 2/3 Avn., pulls parts for a Chinook Dec. 4 at the CAB flight line, Baghdad.

Pfc. Monica K. Smith
3rd CAB Public Affairs

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq – A rivalry between battalions has the potential to allow competition to get in the way of supporting and assisting one another. However, between the tech supply sections of the 2nd and 4th Battalions, 3rd Aviation Regiment, rivalry has given way to brotherhood.

"We are all supporting the Global War on Terrorism and our missions determine the extent of our maintenance program," said Chief Warrant Officer Onwah Campbell, from Sunrise, Fla., tech supply officer, Company D, 4/3rd Avn. Regt. "There is no single battalion that maintains all the necessary repair parts to support their various missions. We therefore find it necessary and very important to maintain constant communication with each other so that the mission will be accomplished as long as the assets are available in our brigade."

While unit supply sections provide each unit's office needs, and the aviation life-support equipment section supplies and maintains flight gear for the aircraft crews, the tech supply sections provide parts for maintaining the

actual aircraft within each battalion.

"We deal with the aircraft; with nuts, bolts, screws, washers, anything that keeps the aircraft flying," said Sgt. Hendria Bailey, from Fayetteville, N.C., and member of Co. D, 2/3rd Avn. Regt. "If we don't have a part or we need something, we can ask around. We can ask (4/3rd Avn. Regt.) for help with our Black Hawks. We all work together."

The tech supply sections are needed as Soldiers conduct maintenance on aircraft, come across problems and begin to troubleshoot. The Soldiers then reference a manual to determine if a part is in need of replacement. When a part needs to be replaced, the national stock number or the part number is brought to the tech supply shop that checks their system to see if they have that part in stock. Otherwise, they order the part or, in some cases, borrow from other units.

"If we have an (aircraft on the ground), we'll put that part on priority," said Sgt. Deonte Sanders, from Flint, Mich., and member of Co. D, 2/3rd Avn. Regt. "If we don't have it, we'll check the units around us to see if they have it. We do what we have to do to get our

aircraft up and running again."

Because 2/3rd Avn. and 4/3rd Avn. Regts. share the same type aircraft, the spirit of support is stronger between them than with other units. However, each unit does its part to ensure the brigade's overall mission is completed.

"We go through the units who have the same aircraft as us, but we'll share with other battalions if they don't have a part either," Sanders said. "For the Chinooks we'll work with (603rd Aviation Support Battalion) ... and for nuts and bolts we can ask anyone and they can ask us."

The work the tech supply provides can be easily overlooked because of its unpretentious role in aviation, said Campbell. However, the work performed by the tech supply section is invaluable.

"If a part is not received by the maintainer in an acceptable condition then that part immediately becomes non-mission worthy," Campbell said. "On the other hand, there are thousands of parts that are on a helicopter that were properly stored and issued, thus making the accomplishment of tech supply as silent as the night."

Army air power boosts surge effectiveness in central Iraq

Sgt. Sara Moore
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON - As ground forces in the U.S. troop surge in Iraq make more progress against insurgents, Army aviation assets back them up with crucial mobility, medical and combat support, an officer in charge of a deployed aviation brigade said today.

The combat aviation brigade of 3rd Infantry Division has been deployed since May in support of Multi-National Division Center. The brigade's helicopters have flown more than 65,000 hours in support of many different missions, Col. Daniel Ball, the brigade commander, told military analysts in a conference call from Iraq.

The aviation brigade has conducted

combat operations; transported ground forces; provided medical evacuation services for Coalition Forces, Iraqi forces and Iraqi citizens; and conducted troop and cargo movement, Ball said.

In addition, some of the brigade's five battalions have transported high-ranking officers and other dignitaries, including Iraqi government officials, around the country.

As far as kinetic -- or traditional combat -- operations go, 3rd Inf. Div.'s aviation brigade has been busy, Ball said. In six months, the brigade has killed 250 insurgents, wounded 100, destroyed 164 structures insurgents were hiding in, destroyed 95 insurgent vehicles, and destroyed 200 boats that insurgents were using as alternate means of getting into Baghdad, he

said.

MND-C is responsible for securing the southern belt in and around Baghdad, which had been a safe haven for al Qaeda, Sunni and Shiite insurgents, Ball noted, so the aviation brigade has had plenty of opportunity to take the fight to the enemy.

"Across the division's battle space, air power is killing about 70 to 75 percent of the enemy," he said.

The ground surge in Baghdad has made it much harder for insurgents to hide out in the local population, Ball noted, especially as citizens turn against violence. In MND-C, 30,000 concerned local citizens have stepped up to assist Coalition and Iraqi security forces, he said.

This positive turn in Baghdad has created more work for aviation assets, because

insurgents are being flushed out of the city and into more remote areas, Ball said.

This makes the enemy easier to detect, but also presents a challenge because aviation units often have to pursue terrorists into these areas without ground support, he said.

"As we squeeze the enemy, he has less place to hide, but the places that he's going, there are less and less people, ... and it gets me further and further away from the ground forces, and it becomes more of a 'disrupt operation,'" Ball said.

Heavy machine guns pose the largest threat to helicopters in Iraq, Ball said. However, the brigade is fully equipped to counter any threats, and the number of successful attacks against coalition helicopters is low, he said.

Hero’s name lives on at firing range



Courtesy Photo

Lt. Col. Ken Peterson (left) and Command Sgt. Maj. Hai Dang, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery Regiment commander and command sergeant major respectively, unveil a new sign Nov. 21 to dedicate their firing range at Forward Operating Base Anaconda, north of Baghdad. The range was dedicated to Sgt. 1st Class Paul Smith, a former 3rd Infantry Division Soldier who earned the Medal of Honor from his heroics during Operation Iraqi Freedom I.

2nd BCT Soldiers help burned Iraqi girl

Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky
2nd BCT Public Affairs

PATROL BASE MURRAY, Iraq – The day after treating 307 local residents at a coordinated medical engagement in Al Buaytha, U.S. Army medics were back on the job again at Patrol Base Murray, treating a 5-year-old girl for burns on her legs Dec. 4.

Dhuha Khalid Abed was playing with her brother near a pot of water being heated on an electric heater when the accident occurred Dec. 1, said Khalid Abed, Dhuha’s father. The pot spilled onto Dhuha’s legs, causing second- and third-degree burns to her thighs.

Abed said he received aid from local Soldiers on the ground, including creams and dressings for the wounds. Seeing his daughter still in pain days later, he decided to take her to PB Murray for additional help.

Medics from the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, assessed the injury and cleaned the wounds.

"Right now we are more worried about secondary infections," said Sgt. Eric Ironsmith, from Shreveport, La., 1/30th Inf. Regt. aid station medic.

Because the burns removed the top layer of skin from her thighs, Ironsmith said Dhuha is more susceptible to infections. That crucial skin layer blocks potential disease.

To help reduce the chance of infections, medics scrubbed the skin, removed dead

tissue around the wound, and applied an antibiotic cream to the injuries.

Despite the severity of the burns, Lt. Col. Hee-Choon S. Lee, 1/30th Inf. Regt., battalion surgeon, said there was hope for the girl. Because the burn did not completely wrap around her legs or occur near a joint, Lee, a native of Lorton, Va., said a recovery was possible.

"I've seen many children out there with burns," he said. "There is quite a bit of hope for her."

Although she may receive scarring on the legs and potentially need skin grafts as she grows, Lee said with proper care the injury can be kept at bay. Lee said it was satisfying knowing he was able to do something for the girl.

Dhuha will still need additional visits and follow-up treatments, Ironsmith said. Lee provided Abed with a note allowing him to bring his daughter back to PB Murray over the next few days and instructions on how to care for the burns at home.

"It is good to know there is someone to take care of me and my family," Abed said upon being released with his daughter, adding he hopes local doctors and the clin-



Courtesy Photo

Capt. Keri Mullens (left), brigade surgeon, 2nd BCT, begins treatment on 5-year-old Dhuha Khalid Abed's legs. Dhuha was brought to Patrol Base Murray by her father Khalid Abed (pictured on right) Dec. 4 to receive treatment for second and third degree burns she suffered while playing with her brother around a pot of boiling water.

ic being planned in his home in Arab Jabour are just as helpful and nice as the American doctors.

To help the community, which currently lacks a clinic, American Soldiers are working with U.S. State Department embedded provincial reconstruction teams to construct a building for use as a clinic and get

the necessary personnel to staff the facility, Lee said.

In the meantime, Lee said he and his fellow medics will continue to help local residents in need of assistance.

"I hope that the community realizes the American presence here is a good thing. We are here to help," Lee said.

2nd BCT helps Iraqi government build from the ground up

Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky
2nd BCT Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE KALSU, Iraq – Talks were held at Forward Operating Base Falcon Dec. 2 to discuss future steps for both Coalition Forces leaders and local Iraqi leaders.

Taking advantage of the lull in violence throughout Arab Jabour and Hawr Rajab, Col. James Adams, deputy commander, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, met with the newly-elected chairman for the Rashid District Council,

Yacoob Yousif Bekhaty.

"The security situation has improved to allow us to make progress," Adams told Bekhaty. "The time is right, with al-Qaeda on the run."

The brigade's embedded provincial reconstruction team is working as a conduit in the community, enabling frequent dialogue between local and national governments.

Once the government of Iraq and local governments begin to work together efficiently, additional resources will be able to flow into the area, increasing quality of life and the people's faith in their government officials.

Adams said projects like opening new schools and creating an Iraqi police force are waiting until the GoI gets involved.

"The good news is the schools are open, but we need the Ministry of Education to support us and we need your help getting that to happen," Adams said. "If you can ensure teachers are paid and more teachers are hired, we can fix the school."

Bekhaty said he will work toward this end and said some positive steps have already been made, including local council members receiving a paycheck from the central government. Bekhaty also explained what he will need Coalition Forces to provide in order to get the GoI's Ministry of Interior to approve the construction of a police headquarters in Arab Jabour and support the upcoming police recruitment drive.

Both Adams and John Smith, team leader, ePRT, offered advice to Bekhaty on how to proceed.

Smith said it is important to have Iraqis like Bekhaty working for the people; someone who knows the district and how it works.

"The morale of the people is high now and they are waiting to see what happens next," Smith said. "If we don't move quickly on some of these issues, we will miss a valuable opportunity."

The parties agreed to meet later in the week to begin circulating the area and talking with local neighborhood councils to prepare them to vote.

"Coalition Forces and reconstruction teams can't do it alone," Adams said, adding that it is vital for the people to see their own government taking steps to move forward.

They hope to have one representative per 1,000 citizens on the district councils and at least three representatives per area to ensure citizens have a voice in their communities.

"People need to see there is a representative from their government coming to see them," Adams said. "If they do not see representatives from the government and action, the people will lose patience. We need to see progress."

Bekhaty agreed to meet with brigade leaders again and tour the areas under their control together to see local improvements and potential sites for future projects.

Adams said he was pleased with the meeting and looks forward to continued progress.

Likewise, Bekhaty expressed his gratitude to the brigade for providing security and standing between the people and terrorists, and for helping bring back life to areas long oppressed.

"We are all Iraqis; we are not working on a sectarian basis," he said. "What you are doing for the Iraqi people is good. We look forward to reaching out to the next generation and creating bonds for the future between the U.S. and Iraq."



Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

Col. James Adams, deputy commander, 2nd BCT, points out ongoing events in his brigade's area of responsibility to Rashid District Council chairman, Yacoob Yousif Bekhaty (left), 2nd BCT bi-lingual, and bi-cultural advisor Shaho Hussein.

Fort Stewart /Hunter Army Airfield Briefs

Join the Jingle Bell Jog

Walkers, joggers, runners, strollers, children big and small are invited to the 2007 Jingle Bell Jog, Saturday at Club Stewart. Runners depart at 9 a.m. followed by the walkers ten minutes later. The cost is free and participants are encouraged to wear red, green or their favorite Christmas themed costume. Recognition will be given to the first person wearing various costumes. You can be Santa all in red with some form of white beard; a Christmas tree all in green with visible ornaments; a reindeer in brown with antlers, or an elf with red and green pointy-shoes, ears and similar apparel. Join the fun in support of the Soldiers.

Place a wreath for Warrior’s Walk

Please help support our goal to place a wreath at every tree along Warrior’s Walk during the holidays at noon, Saturday at Warrior’s Walk. To sponsor a wreath, check out the Wreaths for Warriors Walk Web site at www.geocities.com/wreaths4warrior-swalk.

Medical Transport available

If you need transportation for medical and dental appointments from Tuttle Clinic to Fort Stewart call the Hunter TMP at 315-5865 or 320-5888. Call no later than 3 p.m. the day before your appointment and provide your name, appointment time and location, special requirements, number of passengers, including ages of children.

Bicycle recycling drive slated

If you would like to donate a bike that has suffered from neglect, gently used, or no longer desired – don’t take it to the landfills! The Directorate of Public Works, environmental division encourages you to help in the installation bicycle recycling drive ongoing now through Friday. Donated bikes will be recycled directly back into our community.

Volunteers wanted for tax center

Do you enjoy working with people? Do you possess a knack for working with numbers? If your answer to these questions is yes, then the Stewart-Hunter Legal Assistance Office/Marne Tax Center may have a challenging and rewarding opportunity for you.

In preparation for the 2007 Tax Season, the Stewart-Hunter tax centers are looking for interested volunteers to staff the VITA tax centers at the installation. This opportunity can provide good training and experience for future jobs. For further information you may contact at ACS, 767-5058.

Stewart

Jump into fun with ESC Sock Hop

The Fort Stewart Enlisted Spouses’ Club hosts a Sock Hop, 7

p.m., Jan. 19 at Club Stewart. The event costs \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. Free child care provided at the Child Development Center for registered children. The event will have various contests at the dance. For more information, call Jonna Reed at 271-4086, Maria Eggers at 432-0323, Glenda Hightower at 369-4136 or Sherry Puricelli at 492-4325.

PWOC classes, meets slated

Classes are available for children, ages three and older, including adult Bible study and RCIA classes, 9:45 to 10:30 a.m. Sundays in the Religious Ed Building. Call Pam Perez at 315-5440 for additional information. Protestant Women of the Chapel meets every Wednesday, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Call Valarie Moore at 920-8519.

Marne Shop hours extended

The Shop of the Marne will be open extended hours this month to help you with your gift giving for the holiday season. New merchandise is arriving so stop by building 25 off McNeely Road, behind the PX and check it out! For more information, call the Shop at 767-9268.

Get a wake-up call

Need a pick-me-up in the morning? Stop by the community center for free coffee and doughnuts to start your day off right from 9:30 to 11 a.m., Dec. 21 at The Southern Oaks Community Center.

Hunter

Child scholarships begins

The Defense Commissary Agency’s 2008 scholarship for military children is now accepting applications. The applications are available at the commissaries worldwide and at www.commissaries.com or www.militaryscholar.org. The packets must be turned in to a commissary by Feb. 20 and include an essay (requirements outlined in application). The program is open to unmarried children under age 21 (23 if in school) of military active-duty, Reserve, Guard and retired personnel. For more visit www.commissaries.com.

Come to movie afternoon

Hunter middle and high school youth are invited to attend a movie the first Saturday of each month in the Post Theater (located by ACS) to enjoy a movie, popcorn and Kool-Aid.

Hunter legal center closes

The Legal Center will close at 11 a.m., Friday for a JAG organization function.

Hunter Chapel’s Christmas Service

- Advent Reconciliation Service, 6:30 p.m., Dec. 14

- CYO presents the movie “The Nativity,” 1 p.m., Dec. 16
- Protestant Candlelight Service, 7 p.m., Dec. 24
- Christmas Day Mass, 11:45 a.m., Dec. 25

Hunter vehicle registration moved

Effective Dec. 3, VRO relocated to Wilson Gate. Hours are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.



Stewart

Come to Family Movie Night

It’s show time! Join GMH for a fun Family night with a good movie, popcorn and drinks 6 to 8 p.m., Dec. 28 at the GMH leasing office. For your viewing pleasure “Transformers” will be our featured film. It has a rating of PG-13.

Join Neighborhood Huddles

Be an active part of your community by attending your huddle and sharing ideas, issues or concerns with GMH, 10:30 to 11 a.m., Friday for Marne Homes, Dec. 17 for Marne Woods, and Dec. 20 for Bryan Village North. Due to the cooler weather, all huddles will be held indoors at the Southern Oaks Community Center. Help make your neighborhood a great place to live!

Hunter

Join Neighborhood Huddles

Be an active part of your community by attending your huddle and sharing ideas, issues or concerns with GMH, 10:30 to 11 a.m., Dec. 18 at New Callaway. New Gannam’s huddles will be in January.

Community Watch Needs You

Wanted

Community Volunteers

To Take a Bite Out of Crime

- Need **Concerned Residents** to work with community leaders and law enforcement to establish community watches.

Contact your local Mayor or log on to www.myarmylifetoo.com or call Stewart Community Police Officers at 767-4895 or Hunter Police Station at 315-5214



Looking for employment?

Opportunities for permanent employment are available in non-appropriated funds - Morale, Welfare, and Recreation jobs at Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield.

Management jobs available

The following are positions with frequent vacancies. Applications are accepted on a continuous basis.

- **Child and Youth Services Functional Technology Specialist**, part-time, \$25.35 - \$32.96 per hour, closes Dec. 12
- **Child and Youth Services Assistant Director**, full-time, \$35,000-\$37,000 per annum, closes Dec. 12

- **Administrative Assistant**, full-time, \$25,795 - \$29,239 per annum, closes Dec 12, 2007
 - **Child and Youth program assistant**, \$10.09-\$12.36 per hour
 - **Recreation Aid**, \$5.85 - \$7 per-hour
 - **Operations Assistant**, \$5.85-\$8 per-hour
 - **Cook**, \$8.70 per-hour
 - **Hotel desk clerk**, \$7-\$7.50 per-hour
 - **Cashier**, \$8 per-hour
 - **Custodial worker**, \$7.72 per-hour
 - **Waiter (Trainee)**, \$7.17 - \$8.17 Per-hour
 - **Food Service Worker**, \$7.17 Per-hour
- To search for these types of positions go to cpol.army.mil. click on Employment, click on Search for Jobs, at the bottom of the page under Search-Announcement type in SCNAFDW% then click on “Get Announcement” or hit the enter key. This will narrow your search to

the Stewart-Hunter NAF vacancies. Instructions on how to apply are on each announcement. Additional NAF vacancy announcements currently posted on the CPOL Web site:

Tax Assistants

The Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield tax centers have several Temporary Hire positions for Tax Assistance Coordinator and Tax Preparer for the 2007 Income Tax Season. These positions can be found online at USAJOBS.com or CPOL Web site. Interested personnel should submit their application electronically via the applicable website.

Fitness Center Assistants

Experienced individuals needed to independently carry out a physical fitness program at Stewart-Hunter gymnasiums. Certification as a fitness or Personal Trainer is a

must. The positions start at \$12 per hour. For more information, call the NAF division at 767-5051.

Did you know?

- You don’t have to be a U.S. Citizen to be employed by NAF.
- Hiring preference for eligible military spouses can be used multiple times for employment in “flexible” status positions. You do not lose eligibility until you are placed in a regular full or part-time position (NAF or Appropriated Funds).
- There is a hiring preference in NAF for involuntarily separated military members and their eligible Family members.
- Current NAF employees who have worked one continuous year in a position without time limits are eligible to be considered for Civil Service (GS/WG) jobs the same as APF employees who transfer to Army.
- Youth at least 16 years of age can be employed year round in cer-

tain NAF positions where conditions and duties meet all criteria of Federal and state child labor laws.

- NAF offers a Management Trainee Program that is targeted to annually hire up to 20 recent college graduates who have bachelor’s degrees in certain MWR specialties. Applications are accepted on a continuing basis and will be used to fill Management Trainee Program vacancies as necessary. Go to www.armymwr.biz and click on Programs for more information.
- Eligible employees who move between DOD NAF and APF positions can “port” certain benefits such as retirement, leave, etc.

Need resume help?

Contact ACS employment readiness at 767-1297. For further information on employment opportunities contact the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, job information center at 767-5051.

Education Matters



College term dates announced

Enrollment is starting for the next college term. Please contact the college directly for course schedules and enrollment information. **Central Texas College**– The next term runs Jan. 7 through March 1. For more information at Stewart, call 767-2070, 315-4090 at Hunter. **Columbia College**– The next term is Jan. 14 to March 8. For more information at Stewart, call 767-5336 or 352-8635 at Hunter; **Embry Riddle** – The next term is Jan. 14 to March 8. For more information at Stewart, call 767-3930, or 352-5252 at Hunter; **Savannah Tech** – the next term is Jan. 4 to March 6. For more information, call 408-2430.; **Webster University**– The next term is Jan. 7 to March 6. For more information, call 767-5357 at Stewart, or 354-0033 at Hunter.

Vie for Purple Heart Scholarship opportunities

Learn about scholarship opportunities for Purple Heart recipients, visit www.purpleheart.org or scholarship@purple-heart.org.

Learn about available federal scholarships

Learn about the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund Scholarship at www.feea.org/scholarships.html or call 1-303-933-7580.

Webster offers deployed reduced online tuition

Soldiers enrolled in Webster's graduate classes will receive a reduced rate, while deployed. Contact Marsha Sands at sands@webster.edu, or 354-0033, DSN: 315-5906 for additional information.

Apply for the Georgia HOPE grant

The HOPE Grant is money given by the state of Georgia to students with financial need to attend vocational/trade schools. The grant covers certificate and diploma programs. Any Soldier or Family member of a Soldier who is stationed in Georgia may be eligible. If you are interested in attending a Georgia vocational or trade school, inquire with your school's financial advisor or visit the Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith Army Education Center to speak with a counselor.

HOPE Grant - great opportunity for spouses

Educate while you wait! Get your certificate or diploma and pursue your new career during this deployment. Certificates for Web site technician, child care manager, and medical transcription are a few of the eligible programs offered by Savannah Technical College. Classes are available in the Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith Army Education Center and at the Liberty Campus on Airport Road in Hinesville. For more information, call Savannah Tech in the Sgt. 1st Class Paul R.

Smith Army Education Center at 408-2430, or the Liberty Campus at 408-3024.

Take CLEP and DANTES exams

College Level Examination Program and DANTES Subject Standardized Tests are available on post. Call Columbia College at 877-3406 for more information and testing dates. The exams are free for military personnel and for non-military examinees, CLEP tests are \$85 and DSSTs are \$90.

Free English-as-a-second-language courses

Beginning courses are offered 9 a.m. to noon, Tuesday and Thursday. Intermediate courses are offered 8 a.m. to noon Monday and Wednesday. ESL class registration begins at noon every Tuesday, at the Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith Army Education Center, building 100, room 227. For more information call 368-7322.

Take GED and skills enrichment courses

Graduation Equivalency Diploma and adult education classes are offered in partnership with the Liberty County Adult Education Program at the Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith Army Education Center. The courses prepare you to take the GED Exam or refresh your skills. The courses are free of charge. You can select from one of a number of dates and times, which are 9 a.m. to noon or 1 to 4 p.m., Monday through Thursday; or 6 to 9 p.m., Tuesday and Wednesday in rooms 225 - 228. For more information, call 368-7322. To register for the classes, you must be present for both days of the process. Registration is first come, first serve. Active duty military are registered upon request. Call 368-7322 for complete details.

Green-to-Gold briefing slated

The Green-to-Gold briefings are held at the installation education centers every month. On Stewart the briefings are 2 p.m., the first and third Thursday. The Hunter briefings are 2 p.m., the second and fourth Thursday of each month.

Children's scholarship handbook offered

The Military Children's Scholarship Handbook, "Getting Uncle Sam to Pay for Your College Degree", is available at www.militaryhandbooks.com.

Learning center provides computer resources

The Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith Education Center's learning center has 55 computers with Internet access available. You can use the center to complete your homework, research for your classes, access the Army's basic skills automated program, "Lifetime Library" or just stop in to check your e-mail.

The center is open seven days a week. It is closed on federal holidays. The learning center is room 230, building 100. The hours are 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., Monday – Thursday; 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday; 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday; and noon to 6 p.m., Sunday. The Hunter learning center is open 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday; 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday; and noon to 6 p.m., Sunday. Take advantage of a variety of study resources and Internet capability. For more information, call 315-6130.

Troops-, Spouse-to-Teachers briefings slated

The Georgia Troops-to-Teachers Program provides federal funding to qualified servicemembers of up to \$10,000 for becoming public school teachers. Under the Spouse-to-Teachers Program, eligible military spouses may be reimbursed for the cost of state required certification tests up to a total of \$600. Future meetings are scheduled for Dec. 19 at the Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith Education Center. For more information, visit online at www.tttga.net and www.sttga.net or call 1-800-745-0709 or 767-8331.

Free college course offered

Columbia College Spouse's Opportunity Scholarship provides a tuition waiver for an initial classroom course with Columbia College at the Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith Army Education Center for spouses of military personnel enrolled in their school. This is a value of \$450, which is the cost of their three credit-hour classroom courses.

The program is an incentive for eligible students to embark on a degree program, while completing the financial aid process. Call 877-3406 at Stewart or 352-8635 at Hunter for more information.

\$4500 tuition available for Soldiers

All active duty members have \$4500 per fiscal year for education. This entitlement is separate from the Montgomery GI Bill benefits available from the Veteran's Administration. Details are available at 1:30 p.m., Monday – Friday, during a one-hour brief at the Education Center, room 223.

Savannah Tech offers child care

Child care is available at the Airport Road Hinesville campus. Contact Natasha Brown at 408-3024 ext 6026 for more details.

CTC adds degree programs

Two new associate degrees will be introduced: Information Technology A.A.S and Legal Assistant/Paralegal A.A.S. Also, courses leading to certificate for Information Center Specialist are being offered. Go to www.ctcd.edu for course descriptions. For more information, call 767-2070 or 315-4090.

Ask the Judge: Your tax filing options

Capt. Kurt Gurka
Legal Assistance Office

Q: Judge, I am going to be getting a large refund this year and need to get my taxes done. I prefer not to do them myself. What are my options?

Each year the IRS allows taxpayers to file their returns using traditional paper filing or electronic filing. Electronic filing includes returns prepared by commercial software and providers, as well as returns prepared through Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Centers, like the Marne Tax Center. Most paper returns are self-prepared.

Q: So why would anyone file a paper return?

Good point. That will require the taxpayer to do a cost/benefit analysis. The most significant cost of filing paper returns is the additional processing time required. However, paper returns offer one distinct advantage for those preparing their own returns: you will gain a better understanding of the tax code. Knowledge of the tax code will enable you to reduce your tax burden in future years, by giving you a better understanding of the deductions and credits available. Paying the correct amount of tax is important, but understanding how to pay less in future years is even more so.

Q: That's great, but I'd rather take the path of least resistance. How does electronic filing work?

Electronic returns may be prepared either through commercial providers or through preparation services such as VITA, which is coordinated by the IRS. Those who have adjusted gross income less than \$54,000 for Tax Year 2007 (this year) will have two options for filing their federal tax

returns at no cost, while those with AGI over \$54,000 will have only one option for no cost preparation.

Q: What is my first option?

Those with AGI less than \$54,000 may use Free File. Free File is a free federal income tax preparation and electronic filing program for eligible taxpayers, developed through a partnership between the Internal Revenue Service and the Free File Alliance LLC, a group of private sector tax software companies. You should bear in mind three things when using Free File:

- (1) Those using Free File must enter the commercial software provider's Web site or software through the IRS Web page.
- (2) There may be additional eligibility requirements.
- (3) You are not required to purchase any additional services from the commercial provider when using Free File.

Q: That sounds like a good deal, but what if I do not have Web access or have AGI over \$54,000?

The second option, which is available regardless of your AGI amount, is the use of VITA preparation sites. Large installations such as Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield maintain VITA sites (more commonly called "Tax Centers") for the use of eligible military personnel and their

families. During deployments, units such as the 3rd Infantry Division may also maintain VITA sites in conjunction with Division Headquarters. Currently there are plans for a VITA site at Division Headquarters in Iraq. VITA sites utilize software prepared for the IRS that allows for the electronic filing of your return.

VITA sites can prepare most returns, but not all. For instance, those with significant business or rental income may not be eligible for assistance.

Q: Well, if I end up preparing my own taxes, how do I know which form(s) to use? Or, if my taxes are filed electronically, is a form even used?

Taxpayers will at a minimum file a 1040EZ, a 1040A, or a 1040 Return in order to receive a refund. You may also be required to file additional schedules and forms. Generally speaking, if you are single or married filing jointly, have no dependents, the only tax credit you are claiming is the Earned Income Tax Credit, and your taxable income is less than \$100,000, then you may file a 1040EZ. Similarly, those with less than \$100,000 and who do not have income from self-employment or income received as an equity holder in a partnership, corporation, or as a beneficiary of a trust or estate can typically file a 1040A. All others must file a 1040. For those who need to amend previously filed returns, you should file a 1040X.



Legal Notice

Anyone having claims against or who is indebted to the estate of Spc. Melvin Lee Henley Jr., Co. B, 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, Hunter Army Airfield, Ga. 31409, contact Capt. David Collins, Rear-Detachment, 3rd CAB, Hunter Army Airfield, Ga. 31409, phone (912) 320-5251.

AAFES opens new PX on FOB Hammer

Sgt. Natalie Rostek
3rd HBCT Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE HAMMER, Iraq – Soldiers of the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat team stood in line Dec. 1

awaiting the opening of the new Post Exchange at FOB Hammer.

The doors were decorated with balloons and streamers. A colorful cake and sparkling grape juice sat on a table next to the ribbon which was stretched across the

threshold. Managers and sales associates of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service lined the doors awaiting the final moment when the ribbon would be cut and the first patrons shopped in their store.

AAFES of Baghdad General Manager Paula Gunderson spoke first, thanking everyone who was involved in making the grand opening possible. “We couldn’t have done this without the help of Lt. Col. Kelly Lawler, 1st Lt. John Enfinger, the wonderful AAFES staff, the Expeditionary Red Horse Squadron (Air Force engineers), and everyone who was involved in making this PX possible,” she said.

Third HBCT Commander Col. Wayne W. Grigsby, Jr., from Prince George’s County, Md., said he was amazed at how FOB Hammer has changed since the brigade first arrived to the FOB early March.

April 13, FOB Hammer

celebrated the grand opening of its first PX: two single-wide trailers setting end to end. Soldiers would enter one end of the first trailer, make their way down the isle, and pick up items on the way to the checkout counter at the opposite end.

“A PX like this builds combat power,” Grigsby said. “Soldiers can come off of a mission and have some normalcy. They can come here, get what they need and go back to their tents to rest and relax. Then they are ready for another combat patrol. Sledgehammer Soldiers deserve this. They deserve the best for what they have done.”

After the ribbon was cut, Soldiers (20-at-a-time) piled into the now-open doors.

“I’m very excited about this new PX,” said Spc. Josh Mims, from Cleveland, Ohio, Battery A, 1st Battalion, 10th Field Artillery. “The old PX trailer barely held anything. It was small. This place has a lot more supplies. If I need something, I’m pretty sure I can find it here.”

The new PX is open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. seven days a week.

The 3rd HBCT, 3rd Infantry Division, from Fort Benning, Ga., has been deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom V since March.

Sgt. Natalie Rostek

Third HBCT’s Commander Col. Wayne W. Grigsby, Jr., AAFES of Baghdad general manager Paula Gunderson, Lt. Col. Kelly Lawler, commander of the 203rd BSB, and 3rd HBCT Command Sgt. Maj. James M. Pearson, cut the ribbon officially opening FOB Hammer’s new PX.



New well provides children drinking water

Spc. Ben Hutto
3rd HBCT Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE HAMMER, Iraq – The students of a girls’ school in Nahrwan now have fresh water to enjoy between lessons.

A local contractor completed a well project at the school, funded by the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division Dec. 6, 45 days after breaking ground on the project.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony was attended by Lt. Gen. Abud, the commander of the Baghdad Operations Center, Maj. Gen. Abdul Kareem, the commander of the 1st National Police Division, and several leaders from the 3rd Inf. Div.

“This project will directly impact the 3,500 students who attend the three schools at this site,” said 1st Lt. Chris Sweitzer, a team leader in the 489th Civil Affairs Battalion, currently attached to the 1st Battalion, 10th Field Artillery Regiment. “We have been trying to complete this project since this summer. The improved security situation here finally made this project reality. There was no hesitation on the contractor’s part to come here and work.”

Filters will be used to convert the well

water, which is extremely salty, into drinking water and also allow it to be used for sanitation purposes.

“I think the project will be received really well by the people here,” said Sgt. 1st Class Theodore Brock, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the 1/10th FA’s civil-military operations section. “The contractor put a lot of work into it, using local workers. He went all out to make sure everything was correct. We are planning to do two similar projects at two other schools in the area and we hope they go as well.”

The contractor told Brock that even though the job is completed, he will continue to monitor the system to ensure that it is working properly.

Capt. Josh Beard, from Opelika, Ala., the civil-military operations officer for the 1/10th FA, explained that the Nahrwan city council brought this project to the 3rd HBCT’s attention.

“We are starting to see the Nahrwan Nahia Government take on more projects like this one,” Beard said. “We are seeing projects develop that we do not initiate. The improved security here is the main reason for that. The people here are concentrating on their quality of life rather than their security. It’s encouraging.”



Spc. Ben Hutto

Capt. Josh Beard, the civil-military operations officer for 1/10 FA, greets one of the workers that helped set up the well and filtration system at a girls’ school in Nahrwan Dec. 6.

Constant security helps Adhamiyah markets grow

Spc. Angel D. Martinez
113th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

BAGHDAD – Adhamiyah, a northeastern district of the Iraqi capital, was once a violent hotspot where residents were afraid to go to the store. However, with the help of concerned citizens and volunteers, Iraqis have once again begun to fill the market streets.

“When we first got here and rode around in the evenings it was like a ghost town,” said Sgt. 1st Class Steven Pizzino, platoon sergeant with Troop A, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment. “Now, when we ride around, the streets are full of people, hundreds of people.”

Not long ago there was a security issue concerning local merchants. Local thugs and terrorists were taking advantage of small markets and extorting shop owners, collecting a “fee” in order for them to keep their businesses open, said Pizzino.

In addition to the extortion, locals were afraid to go shopping in the streets due to random attacks by terrorists.

The security issue has been gradually improving thanks to a joint effort by the Iraqi army, the local Iraqi security volunteers and the troopers from 3/7 Cav., who have been a constant presence in the streets of Adhamiyah.

The improvement in security is starting the money flow in the neighborhoods, and that is going to give a fresh start to local citizens, said 1st Lt. Zachary Hoover, the executive officer

for Troop A, 3/7 Cav. It is not just a boost of the economy of Adhamiyah. The picture of people shopping in the streets will give residents a feeling of security, passing that feeling along to others, said Hoover.

The fact that abandoned houses are being reoccupied by people who moved out of town because of the violence is a sign of life flourishing in Adhamiyah, said Pizzino.

Pizzino gives all the credit for the town’s success to its people. “If it keeps going the way it’s going now, it’ll be like it’s a totally different city,” said Pizzino. “Six months from now there should be no violence, really what-so-ever. All the trash will be cleaned up, and the (electrical) power should be better than what it is now.”